1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 Ry4 Koryak Ry4

532 322 778 372 A head-piece of stone or of bone, with a shallow socket, called čeñe'yine (Fig. 2, *e*), which is put upon the thin upper end of the drill; while the thick lower end of the drill is set into one of the holes in the board. The head-piece (*e*) is held by one person, the board by another, while the bow is turned by a third person (see Plate VI). The thin end of the wooden drill, and one end of stone head-piece, have holes bored in them, that they may be tied, when not in use, to the straps at the end of the bow (Fig. 2, *c*).

The fire-drill is not complete without a small leather bag filled with small pieces of coal, in which the coal-dust produced by drilling is collected. It is considered a sin to scatter the coal-dust.

The Maritime as well as the Reindeer Koryak consider the sacred fire-board, first of all, the deity of the household fire, the guardian of the family hearth. During important festivals and ceremonies, which will be described later on, fire is obtained by means of these sacred fire-boards.

The other functions of this charm are different among the two groups of Koryak. Among the Maritime Koryak the sacred fire-board is the master of the underground house and the helper in the hunt of sea-mammals, while among the Reindeer people it figures as the master of the herd. The Maritime Koryak call it "father" (a'pa); the Reindeer people, "master of the herd" (qaya'-ett'nvila'n) or "wooden kamak" (otkamak).

[353] At the left side of the house of the Maritime Koryak, near the door leading to the porch, a place is usually set aside for guardians and charms, and it is called the "stake-house" (op-yan). There wooden charms are driven into the ground or set against the wall. The sacred fire-board is the most important among the images of this shrine. It is adorned with a collar made of sedge-grass, which is used in all sacrifices. This collar serves the charm in place of clothing. It is "fed" from time to time by smearing its mouth with fat. This is done not only during festivals that have a direct bearing on its cult, but also on the occasion of all other religious and family festivals. From the sacrificial fat, the soot of the hearth, and the indescribable filth prevailing in the Koryak house, the charm becomes covered with a heavy coat of shining black filth; and the more highly esteemed the charm is, the dirtier and the blacker will it become. When, owing to frequent use, the entire base of the charm is filled with holes, a new board is made. The old one, however, is left, like a deserving veteran, in the place set aside for the sacred objects. When moving from the winter house into the summer house, nearer to the sea, the Maritime Koryak takes his charms along; but sometimes summer and winter house have each their own sacred fire-board. I remember having seen the Koryak Yulta make a new sacred fire-board for his winter house because he had forgotten his old one in the summer house; and when the following summer came, he left the new sacred fire-board in his winter house. In the summer of 1900, when visiting a deserted settlement

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

reindeer from straying away, and, as often happens, from getting lost. When a reindeer is slaughtered, the sacred fire-board is taken out and smeared with blood. Instead of a grass collar, the Reindeer Koryak put on it a tie made of the hair from the mane of a reindeer-buck.

Among the Maritime group, as well as among the Reindeer Koryak, the sacred fire-board is connected with the family welfare, and therefore it must not be carried into a strange house. But if two families join for the winter and live in one house, in order to obviate the necessity of procuring fuel for two houses, both take their own charms along into the common house, without risk to their effectiveness by so doing. The sacred fire-board is usually transmitted to the younger son, — or to the younger daughter, provided her husband remains in his father-in-law's house and the brothers establish new houses for themselves or raise separate herds. Often fire-boards are found that have outlasted two, three, or more generations.

THE DRUM. — The drum (ya'yai), which, as will be seen later on, plays an important rôle in ceremonials and shamanistic performances, at the same time ranks with the sacred fire-board as one of the guardians of the household. The drum is the master of the sleeping-apartment where it is kept. Every married couple has a drum of their own. A bride who has her own sleeping-tents also possesses her own drum. The drum is especially held in esteem by the Reindeer Koryak. Just as a herd cannot exist without a sacred fire-board, so a family cannot get along without a drum.

KAMAKS AND KALAKS. — A large class of guardian charms are called kamaks and kalaks,[1] — the same names as are applied to the hostile spirits described before.[2] It appears from this that these names do not always signify a thing harmful and evil, like the Yakut word abasy'.[3]

In distinction from the evil spirits, this class of "charm-guardians" are often called otkamak, or okkamak; that is, "wooden kamak." By the Maritime Koryak, the most important place among the wooden kamaks is assigned to the one considered as guardian of the inhabited place. It cannot, however, be called "guardian of the village," in the sense of guardian of the community, since the social organization of the Koryak is so loose that the term "community" cannot very well be applied. The wooden kamak (okkamak) is considered rather as a guardian of the habitation. He is also called Nimyo'lhin, which signifies "habitation," and he appears as a guardian or master of it.

The "guardian of the habitation" has the shape of a post, tapering at the top, and sometimes forked, the thinner branch representing the arm of the charm. It is located close to the village, usually on a hill overlooking

[1] The Koryak plural of kamak is ka'maku. Since kamak has been used with an English plural (Bogoras, Anthropologist, p. 631), the English plural has been used here.

[2] See p. 27.

[3] Abasy' (pl. abasyla'r) means not only "evil spirit," corresponding to the Koryak kala or to the Chukchee kele, but everything harmful in nature.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

hunting for sea-mammals is at an end, then the animals would avoid that house the next summer, and the occupants would be unsuccessful in their hunt. The lower doors of the houses which are occupied only during winter are, for the same reason, not opened at all.

When the lower door is walled up, a ladder is placed vertically on the floor of the house, rising toward the side *f* (Fig. 62) of the entrance-place in the roof (see Plate XX). The ladder is made from half of a split poplar-tree. On the side where it was cleft, that is, on the back of the ladder, the wood is hollowed out like a trough, that it may be easily grasped with the hands. Instead of steps, holes are cut through at distances of from 30 cm. to 40 cm. apart. These holes are like flattened disks in form. They are large enough for the small feet of the Koryak, particularly those of the women, and children's feet would enter up to the instep; but my feet, in shaggy winter stockings and boots, could hardly get through them. On ladders with small holes I had to get up by the tips of my toes only. Once, as I remember, the fur toe of my boot slipped off the step, and I should have fallen down into the house from a height of five metres, had I not clutched the ladder with my hands, and in this manner slid down. Once my cossack, carrying in one hand a bowl of flour for dinner, was going down into the house. In changing the bowl from one hand to the other, he let go of the ladder, and, losing his balance, fell into the house flat on his back.

Occasionally a Koryak falls from the ladder; but as a rule they run up the ladder carrying heavy loads in one hand, their children on their backs, or with heavy buckets of water, or with pails filled with hot soup for the dogs. It is particularly interesting to see how skilfully they strike the holes, coming down without even looking at their feet. Children three and four years old climb up the ladder as quickly as squirrels, and slide down on their hands to save time. Such a way of sliding down is not quite safe, as I found out for myself. The ladder is planed smooth, so that the hands shall not get hurt by splinters. In course of time it becomes covered with a layer of fat mixed with soot, which makes it look as though it were covered with a dark, glossy varnish. The edges are so slippery on this account that it is quite impossible to hold fast to the ladder with the hands, particularly if they are mittened. If one foot slips out of a hole before the other has had time to get into the next, a fall is likely to follow. In such case, one should by no means let go of the ladder, or he will surely land in the house on his back.

In houses occupied all the year round the ladder is removed in summer, and put away on the floor of the house, near the wall, until the next autumn. When the ladder is put up, it is anointed with fat, and charmed, in order that it may not admit any evil spirits into the house. As we have seen before,[1] the ladder is one of the family guardians, and its top is carved in

[1] Part I, p. 43.